

Is there objection to the original unanimous consent of the Senator from Illinois?

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, merely to respond through the Chair, I would say I have been working in that spirit. I have given the language to the majority side. I have been working both at the staff level and Member level with many folks. This should be non-controversial. I don't know of any Senator who disagrees with this. So I will accept that offer. I will not object to this pending unanimous consent, but I truly hope the offer is made in good faith because I believe, when anyone reads this language, they will agree with it.

Again, it simply says these latest recommendations by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, made 2 weeks ago, will not have any legal force and effect. I believe all of us—certainly, it is my impression and, I guess, we will find out tomorrow morning—I believe all of us want to stop them from having force and effect because it is a great step backward in terms of breast cancer screening and mammography and even education about self-examination.

So I certainly take that offer and look forward to the majority side re-reading this language and hopefully accepting it tomorrow morning because I can't imagine, on substantive grounds, objecting to the language.

Thank you. With that, I will not object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the request from the Senator from Illinois is agreed to.

Mr. DURBIN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2808 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2791

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the previous order with respect to H.R. 3590 be modified to provide that the Vitter amendment No. 2808 to the Mikulski amendment No. 2791 be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; that the order be further modified to provide that the vote with respect to the Mikulski amendment should now reflect the Mikulski amendment, as amended.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 2808) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To prevent the United States Preventive Service Task Force recommendations from restricting mammograms for women)

On page 2 of the amendment, after line 15 insert the following:

“(5) for the purposes of this Act, and for the purposes of any other provision of law,

the current recommendations of the United States Preventive Service Task Force regarding breast cancer screening, mammography, and prevention shall be considered the most current other than those issued in or around November 2009.”

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### REMEMBERING MARY JOSEPHINE OBERST

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today I rise to honor the life of a Kentucky heroine, Ms. Mary Josephine Oberst of Owensboro. Ms. Oberst passed away on November 13, 2009, at the age of 95. A native Kentuckian, she proudly served her country as a member of the Army Nurse Corps beginning in 1937. In July 1941, Ms. Oberst was sent to the Philippines, and in early May the following year, when Bataan and Corregidor fell to the Japanese during the Battle of the Philippines, more than 60 nurses, including Ms. Oberst, were taken as prisoners of war, POWs, by the Japanese. These nurses, later christened the “Angels of Bataan,” were held as POWs for 33 months. During this time, Ms. Oberst continued her duties as a nurse, caring for fellow prisoners, even though she herself suffered from malaria and significant weight loss. In early February 1945, the 44th Tank Battalion rescued the POWs who were later brought back to the United States.

After overcoming the medical conditions which resulted from her imprisonment, Ms. Oberst was appointed captain and continued to serve as a member of the Army Nurse Corps. She worked in hospitals in Louisville, KY; Fort Knox, KY; and Ashford, WV, until her retirement from the Corps in 1947. Ms. Oberst was honored for her duty with several military service awards, including the Bronze Star Medal. Mary Josephine Oberst was a woman of high character, who faithfully served our country. Today, I wish to honor her life and her service, as well as give my condolences to her family for their loss.

#### AMINATOU HAIDAR

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I want to bring to the attention of Senators who may not already be aware, a situation that has been unfolding in Morocco and the Canary Islands.

Last year, I had the privilege of meeting Ms. Aminatou Haidar, called by some the “Saharawi Gandhi,” who received the 2008 human rights award from the Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights. Ms. Haidar is a focus of attention again today because she is on a hunger strike in the

Canary Islands after being summarily deported by the Moroccan Government on her way home to Western Sahara from the United States, where, coincidentally, she had been to receive the “Civil Courage Prize” from the Train Foundation.

Ms. Haidar is no newcomer to difficulties with the Moroccan authorities. She was first imprisoned in 1987 when she was a 20-year-old college student, after calling for a vote on independence for Western Sahara. When she was released after 4 years, during which she was badly mistreated, she continued her advocacy for the right of the Saharawi people to choose their own future.

Arrested again in 2005 and separated from her two daughters, she led a group of 37 other Saharawi prisoners on a 51-day hunger strike for better prison conditions, investigations into allegations of torture, and the release of political prisoners.

Since her 2006 release, she has continued her nonviolent struggle, which has brought widespread attention to the cause of the Saharawi people. The United Nations Security Council has repeatedly endorsed a referendum on self-determination for the people of Western Sahara.

On November 13, when Ms. Haidar arrived at the airport in El-Ayoun, she was detained by Moroccan authorities. She was told that by insisting on writing her place of residence as “Western Sahara” on her immigration form, she was in effect waiving her Moroccan citizenship. Her passport was taken, and she was forcibly put on a plane without travel documents to the Canary Islands, a Spanish archipelago located 60 miles west of the disputed border between Morocco and Western Sahara.

She remains there at the airport, separated from her daughters, in the 17th day of a hunger strike, and her health is reportedly rapidly deteriorating. She has refused an offer of a Spanish passport, insisting that she will not be a “foreigner in her own country,” and the Moroccan Government refuses to reinstate her passport. She is, in effect, a stateless person.

This is unacceptable. Article 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which Morocco has ratified, states in part, “Everyone shall be free to leave any country, including his own. . . . No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of the right to enter his own country.”

The situation in Western Sahara is a difficult one for the Saharawi people and the Moroccan Government. It is a protracted dispute in which the international community has invested a great deal to try to help resolve, without success. I recall the time and energy former Secretary of State James Baker devoted to it. The solution he proposed was rejected by the Moroccan Government.

Morocco and the United States are friends and allies, and I have commended the Moroccan Government for